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SUBJECT: PAGAN AMUN THREATENS TO LEAVE GNU CABINET

REF: Khartoum 728

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: GNU Cabinet Affairs Minister and SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amun cited irreconcilable differences with SPLM Chairman and First Vice President of Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit as his justification for why he intends to leave the Government of National Unity (GNU) and join his wife in Colorado. Kiir is reported to be comfortable with Amun's departure, and leading SPLM officials are not entirely sympathetic with the Minister's grievances. Despite this, many in the SPLM continue to press Amun to reconsider a departure from the GNU before the 2009 elections. Although slated to meet with Kiir again before the start of the convention, Amun has also met with the divisive GOSS Vice President Machar on two separate occasions since his threat to depart the party - meetings which worry the SPLM leadership and international observers alike. The SPLM convention begi.Q%Q#z\TPu) a public apology in front of the party" he would "never" work with First Vice President and GOSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit again. Feeling that he is being forced out of a senior position in the party in an underhanded way, angry and humiliated as a result, Amun told Acting CG that he plans to leave Sudan to be with his family in Colorado. Amun, long embattled as Secretary General of the SPLM due to his rocky relationship with party Chairman Kiir, cited irreconcilable differences exacerbated by "Salva's own demons and insecurities" as the primary motivation for his departure from Sudan. "Kiir has said he cannot work with me, and I cannot continue to cover for him in Khartoum, nor serve the party, without his support." Amun said.

13. (SBU) Although Amun stressed the importance of continuing American support for Kiir, he said he could no longer remain active in the GNU. "Salva does not trust me - he believes I am favored by the party, favored by the Americans, favored by Bashir." Amun described instances in which he claims he has "covered" for Salva in Khartoum: spiriting sensitive files to Juba, carrying documents for the GOSS President's action, and making decisions in Khartoum in his stead. "Salva is absent from Khartoum, absent from Juba, and intimidated by the same relationship I have with Bashir that I need to do my job," Amun claimed, before evisceraTing Kiir's(poorQldAdergHip anl maagemdnt{iqls&- aldeoiNo!He!`aS oeve-iravQ-Q-ttdD\$g Bvun)ndS("Y"tTe0CMCSJfg{f0(Nns|e.@uaQcbdaObQe IG5EqLi3*KuepQIQzJ StWkQWfQ,C Amun reportedly took the floor to announce that he was not going to compete for the position of Secretary General. Amun continued, noting "I have heard from (Jonglei Governor Manieng) Kuol and others that Salva has said he can't work with me, and that he has questioned my role in the oversight of the party's finances, and while I don't want to split the Movement, I believe the Chairman should have addressed these concerns to me directly before bringing them to this meeting." He stated he had raised \$32 million for the party and would not have his integrity questioned publicly. Kiir responded from the podium "you wait, we must talk privately" but Amun rebuffed the request, demanding to depart the session owing to recent illness. (NOTE: Amun was hospitalized May 9 for bleeding ulcers. Doctors in Khartoum believed he was close to death. END NOTE). Former Southern Sudan VP Joseph Lagu, GNU Minister for Trade and Investment James Kok, Unity Governor (and projected SPLM SG) Taban Deng Gai, and SPLM elder statesman Abel Alier followed Amun from the meeting to demand he reconsider. Kok reportedly yelled at Amun at length, emphasizing that he risked the party's standing nationally and had abandoned the vision of John Garang.

15. (SBU) Foreign Minister Deng Alor described for poloffs May 14 the intra-party pressure tactics SPLM members were employing on both Kiir and Amun, most heavily on the latter. Alor appeared unsympathetic to Amun's demands to remain Secretary General and his ire over Kiir's preference for Taban. "We are all for the Movement, and we should be expected to serve in any capacity," he said, "I asked Pagan today, 'are you really saying you only support the SPLM if you are SG?'" Like others within the party approached by ConGen staff, Alor, Kok, GOSS Minister for Energy and Mines John Luk Jok all expressed concern that Amun's departure would deeply impact the SPLM in a manner that jeopardized the future status and implementation of the CPA. While acknowledging that Kiir and Amun have traded accusations against one another for years, no SPLM official we have spoken with has sided with Amun against Kiir.

16. (SBU) Vanguard SPLM leaders continue to push for reconciliation between the two. Rebecca Garang, John Luk Jok, Taban Deng Gai,

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Abdelaziz El Helou, Yasir Arman and Michael Makuei have met with Pagan separately or in groups for the last eight hours. Simultaneously, James Kok and GOSS Representative to the U.S. Ezekiel Lol Gatkueth have met with Kiir. Deng Alor told ConGen staff that the pair is due to meet the evening of May 14. Noting Amun's tendency to "become overheated," Alor nonetheless believes Amun's demand for a public apology by Kiir is an impossible demand. Unable to reach a compromise through a stalemate of egos and short of securing the SG slot, it is unlikely that Amun will be persuaded to change his mind. Equally disturbing, however, is news that Amun has met with GOSS VP (and soon-to-be ousted SPLM Vice Chairman) Riek Machar on two separate occasions since May 12. Amun has not QQ6kU) Amun told Acting CG that he plans to fully participate in the SPLM National Convention and stand for election into the 250-person member National Liberation Council (which will replace the Interim National Council). "I will still be committed to the SPLM, as should the United States. Personally, I cannot stay committed to Kiir." Challenged that he appeared to placing his personal status above the party's welfare and the future of Sudan, Amun detailed for Acting CG his rapport with President Bashir. "We sit shoulder-to-shoulder at meetings, and Bashir jokes with me about others in the room - he respects me and my word. Salva does not have the psychological makeup to handle that closeness. Taking away my status in the SPLM takes away my ability to be a threat to the

NCP. I am nothing then, I am just Pagan."

18. (SBU) Comment: It is possible that at some point during the convention the mercurial Amun may reconsider his decision to leave Sudan and join his wife in Colorado, but most observers in Juba seem to believe Kiir will stand by his decision to remove Amun as SPLM Secretary General, and that Amun may not be convinced to remain in his position as GNU Minister of Cabinet Affairs. CG staff will continue to urge Amun to stay on in the interests of party unity. CDA Fernandez called Amun the evening of May 14 to urge that he remain in his position as GNU Cabinet Affairs Minister. Pagan told CDA his decision is irreversible and he looks forward to spending time in the U.S. after a quarter century of struggle with the movement. We anticipate additional developments and party shifts in what appears to be a highly fluid situation in Juba as the SPLM party convention is set to begin May 15.

FERNANDEZ